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SPEECH

OF

HON. F. W. PICKENS,

DELIVERED BEFORE

A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE PEOPLE OF THE DISTRICT,

HELD AT

EDGEFIELD C. H., S. C.,

JULY 7, 1851.

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# SPEECH

OF

## HON. F. W. PICKENS.

MR. CHAIRMAN! FELLOW CITIZENS:

I return you my sincere thanks for the kind manner in which you are pleased to receive me—It is far more than I had a right to expect.

It is with the utmost reluctance that I am induced to trespass upon you at the present time. I assure you in great sincerity, that upon no previous occasion of my life have I risen to speak more reluctantly or under feelings of deeper embarrassment and anxiety for the future. I thank God! that I have been able, for the last few years, to withdraw myself entirely from all the bitter conflicts of party feeling. It was my lot, when very young, to have been thrown into many angry contests in the excited party warfare of the day. I know that I have said many things, which perhaps in cooler moments I might have wished unsaid. But removed, as I have been, for years, from all active struggles in politics, I can truly say that whatever harshness may have been generated by collision, I, at present, feel not a lingering sentiment of unkindness towards any party or any men, with whom it has ever been my lot to come in conflict through the past scenes of life. I never wish again to mingle in the bitter, and, for the most part, heartless struggles of politics. I have enough, in the endearments of home, to give contentment to the heart of any man. But, gentlemen, we are on the eve of mighty events. And the emergency of the country rises superior to all parties or all party con-

tests. Entitled to an inheritance, transmitted through treason and revolution, I would be untrue to those from whom I claim my origin, and prove myself but a bastard, if I could hesitate to risk that inheritance and life itself, if necessary, in defence of the ancient liberties and independence of South Carolina.

If we expect to go through the present controversy successfully, the very first thing to be done, is to produce union, concert of action, cordial and kind feelings at home, in every citizen of the State and between all classes and all parties. We must forgive and forget the past—we must come together as brethren of one family—we must bury all feelings in a consecrated and holy devotion to the State, and nothing but her true honor and interests. Division at home will be fatal to South Carolina—and through her to Southern Independence. All know that to divide South Carolina is to paralyze her arm, and to make her imbecile is to destroy all hopes of Southern co-operation or Southern resistance. Our strength has heretofore consisted in our union, and this has made us a fit basis to commence Southern resistance. We are a small State, and have been isolated by detraction and abuse. The minions of Federal power and the tools of Northern aggression have singled us out for their constant denunciation, because they well knew we stood in their way and were their main difficulty in perpetrating schemes of plunder and usurpation. If we become united, they

become bitter. If we become divided, our deadly enemies begin to exult, and fawn upon and flatter those who make the division.

I stand here untrammelled, to speak the unbiased dictates of my heart and the convictions of my judgment, and I beg and entreat that there will be no party divisions in South Carolina, and that we will give and take, and if we differ, we shall differ as friends and as brothers, with no hard or unkind aspersions whatever. The day of trial is coming, and let no man suppose we are to go through without difficulty and without dangers. Commercial credit is sensitive and dreads a convulsion; banking capital is also sensitive, and to the amount of millions will be deeply felt in any movement calculated to shake society. But if the people of the State, with all the interests of the State, be united and we move with judgement and firmness—standing upon our chartered rights as fixed in the compact and deducible from the history of the Confederacy—we can do any thing that a sovereign people dare do—we can save ourselves by joint co-operation with our sister States of the South, if possible to be obtained by prudence and conciliation—but if all hope of co-operation be lost and we should be driven to the last sad alternative, if we are cordially united at home, we can *save ourselves alone*.

Fellow Citizens:—The great struggle in modern times is for separate communities to preserve their separate independence. The tendency in all modern society is to aggregation, where one consolidated public opinion is to govern absolutely. The press, steam-power, and electric communication all tend to concentrate one united public opinion and public feeling, without reference to different local interests. Local feelings and local rights are all absorbed in one general vortex.

Formerly the great struggle in the world was, to protect and secure the personal or individual rights of man. The contests for liberty were all confined to securing personal rights. But we have long since passed that point in the progress of civil liberty. Magna Charta—tried by jury—and the *habeas corpus*, have all secured more personal lib-

erty at least to every Englishman and American.

But the struggle, now is to preserve the independence of separate communities. It is far more difficult and requires a far more philosophical constitution of society. For one community to be subject to the control or public opinion of another community, if carried out in the power of Government, is political despotism. Magna Charta and its principles have secured personal rights, and a Confederacy of separate independent States, with power in the parts to prevent themselves from being absorbed by the central head, will secure political liberty. English writers and English statesmen have exhausted the subject of personal liberty, but being a compact small territory, with no distinct and sectional interests, entirely consolidated in interest and feeling, they have had no great occasion to investigate the still higher theories connected with the separate rights of independent communities acting together under a common Government.

The French writers and enthusiasts, at the breaking out of the French revolution, pushed personal rights to an extreme. The philosophy of Rousseau and Voltaire and their followers made the public mind drunk with new theories and doctrines. Being goaded and insulted by arrogant orders in society, they made all liberty turn upon the natural and personal rights of man; and the whole French people were converted into a nation of Propagandists. They believed themselves to be the chosen people of fate, destined to overrun the nations of the earth, and to redeem and regenerate a world of mankind sleeping under ignorance and despotism. And they came well nigh at one time to converting whole kingdoms and nations into mere provinces of a great French Republic. Many of our leading men of that day caught to some extent the enthusiasm and wild theory of French liberty. Amongst them were FRANKLIN and JEFFERSON. They endeavored to plant many of these doctrines in America. It was from this kind of philosophy that the abstraction contained in our declaration of independence, "that all men are born equal" was taken, and many supposed



that this carried out, would always give liberty. And the higher and far more philosophical proposition, that all separate and independent States were equal, seemed for a time to be lost sight of. The Northern people now seem to believe themselves to be the inheritors of French philosophy and French liberty; and under this idea, suppose that they are the chosen and peculiar people, under Providence, to spread the blessings of universal equality and relieve us from the evils of our local institutions. They consider themselves to be the elect of God to govern the world according to their notions.

It is well ascertained from history, that at the formation of the present Federal compact there were great and important interests in the separate States, peculiar to the different States. They were not ordinary interests that spring up in a body politic, but they were vital interests, essential to the very existence of the States themselves. Amongst these was the institution of domestic servitude. It is well known that the constitution could not have been adopted unless this interest were left exclusively under the control of the States interested, and unless it had been understood that the Federal Government was entirely excluded from all interference with it after the year 1808. And if the States now have not the right and the power to protect it in any way that their judgements may dictate, then there has been a perversion of power and they have been defrauded. If power has been exercised over them so that in their judgements, the peace and final existence of their society may become endangered—they have a right, under the *police power* if nothing else, to protect and defend themselves in any way that they may deem necessary.

If the power of the non-slaveholding States be concentrated through the Federal Head so as to act upon, and absorb the slaveholding States, or to circumscribe their increasing power on account of their institutions, then if there be no check through the action of the States concerned, it must end in political despotism. If the people of Massachusetts, and New York, and Pennsylvania, and Ohio, be brought to act together by their prejudices,

or feelings, or public opinion, so that they move as one mass, and get control of the Federal Government, and bring it to bear, in all its moral and political power, upon the local institutions of the Southern States, then as far as these are concerned, they are governed by a people as alien to them as if they were entire foreigners. What consolation is it to a South Carolinian to tell him that he is governed by the freemen of Ohio who understand liberty much better than he does, and who deem it a duty they owe to God that the country shall be finally purged of the sin of slavery? What may be very well suited to Ohio, may not suit South Carolina at all. The whole organization and structure of our Society are different. They are almost two distinct orders of civilization; the one resting upon the individual equality of men of all colors, and the other resting upon domestic servitude in the black race. This distinction pervades all society, entering into the social, moral and political relations of every man in the two sections. They teach their children in their schools and at their fire-sides to condemn and hate us and our institutions. The same is taught from the pulpit and around the sacramental table, as well as in their politics. Who is to judge between us? The Federal Government? If this Northern majority control it absolutely, and finally bring it to bear upon these points, then it is but the judgment of Ohio in another form brought to act upon the interests and institutions of South Carolina. If this be the habitual working of the system, then indeed are we a doomed race. The truth is there are sections and States in this confederacy having totally different local interests, and the separate independence and equality of the States is essential to guard and protect those interests in our system. State equality is an essential principle of liberty. We may have general interests in our external relations and foreign intercourse united, but when the General Government acts upon the organized local institutions of the country, then it necessarily becomes a despotism—an engine turned upon the interior liberty of sections, instead of maintaining our exterior independence. True liberty consists in a system of fixed and

ascertained law, suited to the interests of the community, and regulated and controlled by those upon whom the law operates. What may be very good local law to South Carolina may be totally unsuited to Ohio. To take our institutions and transplant them there would be as vain as to plant the orange tree upon the frozen Mountains of Vermont and expect it to bloom and to bear. And so in like manner, to transplant the social and political institutions of Ohio in South Carolina, would be as vain as to expect us to live on whale-blubber upon which the Esquimaux fattens.

No! the Federal compact between the States was made with a view to guard and protect these different local interests and institutions, by reserving to the States exclusive jurisdiction over their peculiar and separate interests. Without this the Government could never have been formed, and without this, it should never be preserved. Mr. Chairman! the separate sovereignty and Independence of these States is the fundamental law of American liberty.

In the declaration of Independence it is expressly laid down that these "*colonies*" (not these people) "*are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States.*" In the old articles of confederation, the very 2d article, expressly declares that, "*each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence.*"

In the present constitution it is laid down that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people." This compact did not make an amalgamated people—it only united States together for certain specified objects. The mode and manner in which it was adopted proves this. It was acceded to by the States separately in their State Conventions, and until each State adopted it for itself it had no binding effect upon such State. North Carolina and Rhode Island actually refused to adopt it for sometime, and they could have remained out of it to this day if they had thought proper. The debate in this State took place in the Legislature upon the proposition to call a convention to ratify the constitution, and the call of the convention was carried by only one vote. Ninety-six dis-

trict, of which this district was a portion, voted against it except one vote, and the great majority in the middle and upper districts were against its adoption. It was carried by Charleston and the low-country. The convention, sitting in the capacity of a sovereign State, imposed the obligations of the federal compact upon us as citizens, and the same sovereign power can be again called into action to release us from those obligations. As the State acceded to the compact so, it can secede in like manner. Without this right and power the reserved sovereignty and independence of the States is all rabid declamation and swelling assumption.

The right and the power of the separate States to check, in an extreme case and as the last resort, by secession, is essential to preserve their independence. If this were known and acknowledged as a dormant power belonging to our system, there would be no cause for dissolution, for the Government would abstain from usurping power over local and vital interests, and the States themselves would feel easy as they had the ultimate power to protect themselves, and would not become excited on any temporary usurpation or exercise of obnoxious power. But without this, there must ever be in the public mind a restless uneasiness and impatience, for fear that the ultimate liberty of the parts cannot be preserved. And the Government which was created as a mere agent to execute the compact between the States, will in the course of time, make its own interests the measure of its power, and substitute that power as the law for the States that created it, instead of the compact itself. This compact is not a compact with the Federal Government, but it is a compact between co-States of the confederacy. And when a State, in its sovereign capacity, makes an issue upon the organic law by which it is connected with the other States, it is an issue not with the Federal Government, but an issue with the co-States. And if the Government interferes to decide the issue then tendered, it is usurpation—and if it tenders force to put down the State, thus making the issue upon the original powers of the compact, it is despotism, and we are cowards and slaves if we

do not meet it like brave men, although the land should be drenched in blood or wrapt in flames.

But Mr. WEBSTER says, that the Government after it was created has original and inherent powers of its own, which it is bound to execute and protect. Original and inherent powers! He has never condescended to point out what these are, but was obliged to take that ground, after first denying that the constitution was a compact, and when his Boston Review was forced to give that point up, he fell back upon the doctrine of original and inherent\* powers in the Government after its creation.

This is a great question fellow citizens; and bear with me while I examine it freely, for we are at the commencement of a mighty struggle. The issue whether we are under the Government of Independent States or under the Government of an absolute majority feeling for themselves only, is to be decided, and if it is to be decided by force we must not only be right, but we must understand the grounds upon which we move.

I have said that the States acceded to the compact as separate States, and to deny this is to deny history. But I go further and say that it was not only made by the States as States, but that they only can unmake it—and I say that the Federal Government at this day is but the creature of the States. How is the instrument to be amended or altered? Is it by the people of the Union? No! Article 5th, declares that amendments may be proposed and if ratified or adopted by "the *Legislatures of three-fourths of the SEVERAL STATES*, or by *CONVENTIONS in three-fourths thereof*," shall become part of the constitution. It is the States that made the constitution and it is the States alone that can alter it. Three-fourths of the States can make a new constitution and a new Government under it. Suppose three-fourths of the States, by amendment to the constitution, declare there shall be no Navy and no Army, or that there shall be no President and nothing but a Congress of States. Can they not

do so? and where then is the power of this Government? where are the original and inherent powers that belong to it, independent of the States? To talk about the Government having substantive powers independent of the States is nothing but naked assertion. Suppose a simple majority of the states should refuse to elect or send Senators to Congress where would your Government of inherent powers be? I admit, as long as we are in the Union, it is a constitutional duty in the States to elect Senators; but suppose they should think it a duty not to elect—where is the power to compel them? If under force they are compelled to send Senators, it is not of their free election, and itself changes the Government. There can be no law made without a Senate, and I only use this to shew how completely the Government is in the power of the States. In fact it is a Government of States, and of no simple majority of people. Wherever reposes the power in any community to make or amend the organic law by which the community is kept together, there resides sovereignty. If the written constitution be the supreme law of the land, the power that can make it or alter it is the supreme and sovereign power of the land. I have shewn that the States alone made the constitution and that they alone can alter or amend it, even so as to alter the whole Government itself, and if that be not sovereign power, then I am at a loss to conceive what can be. The truth is, the Federal Government has no sovereignty.

It is an agent limited by the specific grants of power made by the States. The only thing that even appears to contradict this idea is the power given to punish treason. Treason is an offence against Sovereignty. But this power itself is limited by the States who granted it; for they refused to give the power to define treason, and have themselves defined it in the very grant to punish it, and declared in what only it shall consist, and have even laid down how it shall be proved. It shews they intended to grant no sovereignty, for they limit and define exactly the power of the Government—even in treason. And the treason they define, is treason against the conjoined sovereignty of the States, not

\*See the Review of the great debate between WEBSTER and CALHOUN, in the North American Review.

against the Government. For it is "levying war" against the "United States" that constitutes treason and nothing else does. As long as the States are united, there can be no treason, but when they are no longer united and sovereign power has absolved them, there can be no treason, for it cannot exist against the Government. All this shows that the government has no substantive powers: And that the compact is a compact with co-States, and on a question involving the original powers of the compact itself, if a State make an issue, it is not with the Federal Government but with the co-States. And there is no power granted in the compact to the Government to enforce obedience, but the States themselves must sit in judgment on the issues made, and three-fourths of the States can affirm the power denied; for they alone can add to or amend the constitution or affirm what it is, to bind a sovereign member of the confederacy. Any power short of this is usurpation and changes the whole genius and theory of our system. The whole system rests upon friendly discussion, upon a compromise—fair argument and truth, and a full hearing and final decision by independent and sovereign States with all their moral and political weight. In this point of view, the States are the *Peers* of each other. And if three-fourths decide against a sovereign State, then may arise the question of *final* secession—and if three-fourths, not only affirm the power, but grant force to the use of the government to carry out that affirmation, secession can then be adopted finally at the risk of the State. But if compulsion or force be used before this, it is lawless and the Government assumes a power not granted and must end in despotism.

The States of the confederacy in many points of view are the *estates of the Realm*. And on all vital questions involving the organic law by which they are united, their power must be recognized or there can be no real independence. There can be no political liberty unless these *estates* are fully and fairly consulted. Without this we have made no advance over Europe in civil liberty itself, to suit the issues of modern society.

If oppression be intolerable, the lowest sort of Russia can appeal to arms and to revolution, and so can the Turk—but this is no system of liberty. The European draws the sword and appeals to revolution to vindicate his liberties, but we appeal to sovereign States with organized governments who shall give such authoritative declarations of the fundamental law as shall guard and protect our liberties, without an appeal to arms in the first instance.

They made the constitution and can alter it, and they *alone*, in a *great emergency*, can reform and regenerate the action of the Federal Government. This makes us a confederacy, as contra-distinguished from a simple democracy, where the sense of States has to be taken on sectional questions affecting the liberty of the parts. Without this, we have a central unchecked Government under the control of a majority antagonist to us, instead of a confederated republic where the power of the head is not inconsistent with the liberty of the parts. This is the original conception of our system, and a part of its very existence.

But many oppose that the constitution itself has created a common arbiter in the Supreme Court of the United States—instead of the tribunal of the States. This is a great mis-conception. In the clause conferring jurisdiction upon the Court, the wonderful wisdom of the instrument is illustrated as well as in every other clause. The words are, "the judicial power shall extend to all cases *in Law and Equity*, arising under this, the constitution, the Laws of the Land and treaties &c." An amendment to the constitution, made at the instance of Georgia, also prohibits a State being sued. Those who drew this clause were lawyers and well understood the legal language they used. "Cases *in Law and Equity*," are such as can be made up by pleadings where the rights of *meum and tuum* are involved, where individuals can appear—where mere rights of property can be decided. But where a State makes an issue in her sovereign capacity on the compact itself—it is a high political question, beyond the pleadings to be made up by individuals. When a State secedes or chooses

to release her citizens from the obligations of the federal constitution, her citizens can no longer be reached by federal power in any form.

The State cannot be sued, for it is expressly prohibited, and when she makes an issue, it is political and not "in Law or Equity." The very nature of the issue is the reverse of any thing in "Law and Equity." There is no forced construction that can give jurisdiction. To do so, would pervert the whole genius of the Court and make it more than a 'Star' Chamber Court ever was. True, political opinions of individuals and even of corporations were brought under the jurisdiction of the old 'Star' Chamber Court, but sovereign States were never brought there. No! there is no umpire. The sovereign States themselves are the judges in the last resort, and from the nature of things there can be no other judges compatible with sovereignty. The power to interfere and check in extreme & vital cases, involving the liberty of the state, is inherent in the nature of the compact itself. Without this we have made no advance in the system of regulated liberty. It is the great distinctive feature of American freedom.—It is the great fundamental law of the American compact, without which we are under a consolidated despotism, one, from which we will have to march sword in hand and through the perils of revolution. Under the recognition of this great fundamental right belonging to the States, there can be peace and no revolution. A fair adjustment and new understanding of the compact may yet give life to the confederacy. But without it our doom is fixed.—the hand writing is upon the wall, and we have no alternative, but an appeal to arms and the God of battles.

But the right of a State to secede or interpose was not questioned by the republican party of old. The Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798, drawn by Jefferson and Madison, expressly laid down the doctrine boldly and ably, and it was universally recognized by the republican party from that day until now. Virginia did actually interpose and declare the alien and sedition laws of no force, null and void within her territories—and empowered the Legislature to car-

ry it out. The Government was checked and controlled, and a civil revolution was brought about. If those who enacted these laws had held power and persevered in enforcing them, the Union would then have been dissolved. But State interposition made the issue palpable and they were overthrown.

The right to withdraw or secede is not left to inference, although clear from the very nature of the compact and of sovereignty in the States. But New York, in the conditions upon which she ratified, expressly declared that the 'powers of Government may be reassumed by the people whensoever it shall become necessary for their happiness.' Virginia did the same except using the words, "whensoever the same shall be perverted to their injury or oppression." Rhode Island did the same. Those were the conditions these States expressly annexed, and if it was a right they expressly reserved, if it avails any thing, it accrues equally to all; for it was ratified by equals and no one could retain a power which each and all did not have alike. But it does not require that the right should be secured *in totidem verbis*. It belongs to the existence and independence of a State and cannot be limited or circumscribed by any parchment on earth.

But it is said this would make the Union a rope of sand. So it was said in old times that trial by jury would be a serious clog to an efficient government. To assert that it was necessary to obtain the verdict of twelve men, before you could convict a State criminal, would embarrass Government and ministers of state could not get along with powers. All free Governments are full of checks. It is the checks that make liberty. Despotism has no checks. So far from the interposition of States on vital local interests making the Union too weak, it is the only thing that can save the Union. Without this, in so extensive a country with such variety of interests, its dissolution is as inevitable as destiny. Heretofore the difference in our social and domestic institutions and our almost distinct orders of civilization, have not been so deeply felt, because we have had a sparse population. But as population increases and becomes pressed down

into its different classifications, and grows dense—then these differences will be deeply felt and the conflict will grow more deadly. Nothing can save us but the recognized power of the States. What has aided in keeping this Union together heretofore has been the fear of European interference if we should separate. Fragments of the confederacy might be subsidized or conquered by European powers with monarchical institutions and thus monarchy might be reinstated here. This was the great fear in the early days of our Republic. But the last few years have dispelled all such fears. It is now apparent that European monarchies can scarcely maintain themselves at home. The convulsions of the last few years came near overthrowing their own Governments, and the day is now past when there is any danger from European interference in American Governments. WASHINGTON'S farewell address, which has been so often quoted by demagogues, was drawn in reference to the state of the world at that time. We were then, comparatively speaking, but a handful of people. We had but recently come out of a bloody struggle with Great Britain. There was deep prejudice to our institutions in Europe. And the great dread with us was, that we might be re-conquered or portions might become subsidised. United we could defend ourselves and divided we would be ruined. To keep us together so as to defend ourselves from Europe, was the great object of WASHINGTON'S address. It was suited to the day in which it was delivered. We have now passed from a weak to a powerful people. The address was to rally us against Foreign power, but never contemplated one powerful section of the Republic combining so as to insult and degrade nearly one half of the States of the Republic. It is totally inapplicable to the present state of the world and to our country. We are now alive to other dangers than disunion, and the dormant powers of the States may be called out to their fullest development according to the genius of our system, without at all running into the dangers that WASHINGTON dreaded from European interference. We are now strong enough to develop the true nature of our Government

fully, and as it might have been too weak at first to encounter the power of Europe, true patriotism then required a cordial Union to support it. But, if in its progress, it becomes too powerful at the centre for the independence of the parts, then true patriotism would require a checking power, and that the States should be raised up to assert their original rights and independence, so as to force back the Government itself into a channel compatible with regulated and enlightened liberty. It is vile demagoguism to quote the great WASHINGTON'S farewell address as applicable to the present state of the country; those who expect to save the Union by simply doing that, without reforming the Government first, hug to themselves a fatal delusion.

Fellow citizens! we now come to investigate our present position as a State, and to state fairly what may be our particular duty in the present emergency.

I was opposed to the call of the Convention under existing circumstances, and particularly opposed to the meeting of the convention being so long after the election. I thought it would give a pretext for divisions amongst our own people. I thought it dangerous to repose the sovereign power of the State, even extending to life and property in its results, in so small a body of men as constitute that Convention, for so long a time in advance. The great strength of a convention consists in coming fresh from the people, and the people themselves deciding all great questions in advance. I thought there was danger of confusion and feared final imbecility. I therefore would have preferred the election of the Convention to take place in October next, instead of February last. But now that we are in Convention—I am for going through. I am against standing still or taking any step backwards. True, the issues may somewhat change by next Spring when the Convention meets. New questions may arise that may vary the prospect of affairs. Allow me to say, with deference to others, that the great danger now is, not rashness, but division and imbecility. The danger is that we will sink under the pressure brought to bear on us. I fear, that if we pass this crisis without doing something,

the country will sink. The spirit of our people will die away. If we permit this accumulation of all power in the Federal hands under the dictation of Northern fanaticism, Northern prejudice and Northern interests, we will be worn out and prostrated, and finally quail before despotism.

Our young men will sink—They will begin to worship Northern power, and become indifferent to their own country. They will bow down before a magnificent Government where liberty will be absorbed in the extended rays of patronage—

“They will crook the pregnant hinges of the knee

Where thrift may follow fawning.”

Our very women will condemn and despise us as a degenerate race, and they will look to others for protection. The first evidence of the corruption and decay of a people, is that the women begin to idolise foreigners. If the men become cowardly and luxurious, the women begin to look to others for that manliness which they so much admire. Such was the case in Mexico and such will be the case in every country where the men want spirit to defend their rights. I know that the great chartered rights and independence of my State are in danger—I feel that we are a degraded people if we do not rise. I desire co-operation with our sister States of the South—I will wait to the very last while there is hope—I will yield every emotion of pride and every thing, but a sacrifice of principle, to procure co-operation.—But it may become our sacred duty to act alone and if so, we must walk the plank alone like men, although that plank may lead over a gulf of frightful dangers. If it be a right to secede—it is a perfect right, and belongs as much to one State as to all. It is a right incident to sovereignty. And the denial of that right by the constituted authorities would make it an imperious duty to exercise it. If this be the issue, the sooner we test the question of the unlimited powers of the Federal Government, the better. But the gentleman (Capt. Brooks,) has quoted from a speech of mine delivered in Spartanburg last August, urging co-operation and joint action with the South. I do so now. But he must recollect,

that speech was delivered under totally different circumstances from the present. It was delivered before the second meeting of the Nashville Convention when we were actually in consultation with our Southern brethren. It was delivered before the election and meeting of the Georgia State Convention—before the meeting of the Virginia Legislature, before the extra session of the Mississippi Legislature—and before our own Legislature had met or done any thing. I feared that we might become isolated at that time. But all these things have taken place and we exhausted every thing in trying to produce co-operation—and we are now free to take our own course, exercising our best judgment for the welfare of all.

The gentleman will see, in that very speech I ask if others should give way and we should fail in co-operation—what then will South Carolina do? I said then “she dare not submit finally.” Let others do as they will, she was bound, (not by any commital, for a State is not committed to herself—and only committed when acting with others,) to go through. I used this language—“what others may do we cannot say, but I trust I may be excused for saying, we cannot—we dare not submit finally. If we do, the mighty spirits that sleep under the plains of the Cowpens and Entaws would turn in their graves with scorn and indignation for their degenerate sons.” The very speech from which the gentleman quoted contains this language.

I was for concert and co-operation, but I never dreamed that we were to fold our arms and wait forever. I was for waiting and doing all that reasonable men could do to produce concert and unanimity in the States, but I never conceived the idea, that in no emergency, should we be forced to act alone.

In the first Nashville Convention, I took the ground that decided and concerted action of the leading Southern States would preserve our rights, and the Union too. The States, if they had then united firmly and temperately, could have made an authoritative declaration of their rights under the Constitution, and it would have been equivalent to a bill of Rights in all time to come. If Virginia had taken the lead in this matter,

our rights would have been preserved and the Union too. I said then, that without this, the States would be driven to separate action, and this would bring on a convulsion and in all human probability disunion. I saw it then and I see it now. Virginia and Georgia permitted the occasion to pass, by which they might have saved the Constitution and avoided a convulsion. Those two States acting together then, could have controlled the South and dictated terms. They have passed it by and we now must make our own issues and save our own liberties. We were the first State to put forth a written Constitution and form a government independent of Great Britain, even before the joint declaration of Independence, and we also as a State won a glorious victory before that declaration. And, if we are true to ourselves, we can stand alone again. I do not stop to ask the question, whether, we will have rendition of fugitive slaves secured perfectly, or whether it will affect the value of that species of property and its profits, if we move alone. I scorn and despise this small view of a great question. It is a question of chartered rights—of Constitutional liberty and rises far above these small views.

If they have a right to say that you shall not go beyond a certain line with your slaves, they have a right to say you shall not go with any other species of property. If they had declared in so many words that the people of Mississippi, of Alabama, of Georgia and of South Carolina, shall not go above a certain line into any of the public Territories of the Union—if they had named these States the insult and degradation would have been so palpable, that an army of Southern soldiers would have taken the field at once to avenge the wrong. And yet they have done precisely the same thing in effect. If they have a right to exclude you with your slaves, they have the right to exclude you as citizens of the States named. As far as constitutional power is concerned in government, the ingenuity of man cannot show why they should have the power in one instance and not in the other.

If they can put the citizens, holding slaves in certain states, under the ban of the confederacy

they can put the States themselves by name and the citizens as citizens. The Constitution declares that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." And yet the government openly asserts that that the citizens of near half the States of this Union, shall not be allowed to go above a certain line with the privileges of their property, but shall dispossess themselves of the most valuable part of that property before they can claim equality, in privileges, with the citizens of Ohio or Massachusetts. They make a Compromise line of 36° 30" when it suits them to seize half the territory of Louisiana, and then, instead of carrying out that line in good faith, as it was intended, in spirit and substance to the Pacific, when it suits them to seize territory below it, they do so without remorse and without shame.

Where is their Compromise? Where is their plighted faith? Are we to be circumscribed at their pleasure? Are we to be encircled in great penitentiary walls by our masters and our keepers?

Merciful God! are we born slaves or are we born freemen? Are the descendants of Cavaliers to let the swords of their forefathers hang around them, in their halls, to rust forever? Do they dread to draw them, because forsooth a nation of Yankee shoe-makers may let drive at them with their awls, or a nation of weavers may threaten to raise their shuttles and spindles?

Mr. Chairman! the final result of all these measures is to abolish slavery in the States, or to render it valueless, and thus to force those who own them to abandon the country or perish in its ruins. To establish the truth of this—bear with me while I go back and trace the history of events particularly for the last twenty-five years. Look first at its rise and progress in England. When Wilberforce first proclaimed his doctrines of emancipation for the British West India Islands, he had few or no followers, and I believe he was mobbed in the streets of Liverpool, or at least treated with great indignity. The productions of those Islands and slave labour were then of great importance to England, and the movement was looked upon



as a direct blow at her prosperity and commercial wealth. The proposition for emancipation was scouted, and received but slender support in the British Parliament for years. And yet Wilberforce lived to see the day when he bore down the common sense and talent of England by mad fanaticism and wild philanthropy. The deed was consummated against the judgment of the thinking classes. And the Prime Minister of England, in the same speech, by which he carried the Emancipation Bill, congratulated the country that he would thereby finally be enabled to withdraw troops from these West India stations and station them in Ireland!! Emancipate the black man of the West Indies and station British bayonets to keep in slavery the white man of Ireland! What a comment upon British Philanthropy! And what has been the result? Ireland under the British bayonet—in chains and perishing with starvation.—The West Indies free, yet poor—miserable—wretched, in degradation and ruin. And this is what the world called humanity!

The movements for emancipation in France and England were then transferred to the United States. And as short time ago, as 1834 and '35, when I first entered Congress, it was talked of as belonging to a few obscure fanatics who were considered madmen and utterly unworthy of all kind of notice. They were merely laughed at. In 1836 they began to send in petitions quite frequently to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, &c. Gen. Hammond and myself, although very young members, at that time, made the question of reception on those petitions. It produced great excitement, and it was thought even by Southern members that we were ultra and extravagant in our views. I recollect well, in a speech I then delivered, denying the Constitutional right of the Government to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia without the consent of Virginia and Maryland. I said that there was danger from this party of abolitionism, and that the day would come when they would hold the balance of power, and overrun both parties at the North and endanger the existence of this Union. I was pronounced a madman and it was gravely put forth in a

New York paper that I ought to be expelled the House of Representatives for such sentiments. A large majority even of Southern members had a decided feeling against me on these points. Things went on rapidly growing worse and worse until, in 1837, Mr J. Q. Adams presented a petition from twenty-three slaves of Fredricksburg, Virginia,—praying Congress to abolish slavery, &c. This produced great excitement and, after much discussion, it ended finally in the House passing a resolution which was equivalent to affirming that slaves had a right to petition. The Southern members called a meeting and I proposed that we would not again take our seats until the obnoxious resolution were repealed by the non-slaveholding members themselves. After several days of excitement, my proposition was voted down and the resolution was repealed by the assistance of Southern votes. I refused to vote at all, and never afterwards attended any caucus of Southern members on the subject of slavery. I was rebuked as an agitator, and, in a circular addressed by the delegation from Mississippi to their Constituents I was openly denounced as a traitor to the Union, while others were praised for saving the Union. I merely mention these things now, to show the rapid progress of events, and not to show the humble part I may have had in them, for I only happened to be put in that position from the deep interest I then felt in the matter.

It was about this period that Mr. Adams began to assume the doctrine, that Congress might have power over the whole subject of slavery in the States—and used the remarkable language upon the floor, when asked by a gentleman from Alabama, what he would do if abolition produced sluices of blood, he exclaimed in great excitement, "*Let it flow! Let it flow!!*" I mention Mr. Adams merely because he was the great leader of agitation—and gave form and consistency to Fanaticism. His high position and eminent abilities gave dignity and power to all those movements which were started under his advice, and which will end where. I sincerely believed, he desired them to end, in a dissolution of this Union. Then came on the ex-

citement as to recognition of Independence and annexation of Texas. A large portion of the North were enlisted against Texas simply on the ground that it might increase the power of the Slave States. They declared often and over in their resolutions and through their papers that annexation of Texas would be a dissolution of the Union. This has been their feeling ever since the purchase of Louisiana. Mr. Josiah Quincy, an able and leading member of Congress, from Massachusetts, when the Bill for the admission of Louisiana was before Congress, used this language, "If this Bill passes it is my deliberate opinion that it is virtually a *dissolution of the Union*—that it would free the States from their moral obligations; and that, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, definitely to *propose for separation, amicably if they can, forcibly if they must.*" Such was the universal doctrine of bitter Federalism then against the admission of Slave States—and such is their doctrine at this day. Mr. Webster in his recent speech at Buffalo, so much lauded, says at the time Louisiana was acquired he was "too young to hold any office or take any share in political affairs." He says he had "nothing to do with the Florida treaty or the admission of Florida!" He says also, "I never would consent that there *should be one foot of slave territory* beyond what the old thirteen States had at the time of the formation of the Union." He says, as to the annexation of Texas, "I sought an occasion to proclaim my utter aversion to any such measure, and I determined to resist it with all my strength to the last!" He further says in the same speech, "*I will not now or hereafter consent to be numbered among those who introduced new slave power into the Union. I was born at the North—educated at the North—have lived all my days at the North—I wish to see all men free. I have no associations out of the Northern States—My people are your people. You will find me true to the North because all my sympathies are with the North.*" If this had been uttered by a Southern Statesman he would have been denounced by the minions of power as narrow and sectional in all his feelings—an ultraist—a disunionist.

And yet when it is proclaimed by the highest Minister of State, and comes to us with the unction of official dignity and under the patronage of Magisterial authority, it is all eloquence—all genuine American patriotism! What right has he, as an Officer of Government, to proclaim himself exclusively a Northern man? Has it come to this that the government is already assumed to belong to one section, and are we to be considered merely as their provinces? Is he to be Secretary of State for the North alone! And is this to be his policy in conducting the foreign negotiations of the country? Are we to be outlawed? And is he, in no event, to protect slave power or slave property? Where then is our protection under the national flag?—Talk about a single State not being able to give protection to our interests!—better, far better stand alone—than to receive such protection as is thus tended to us by the Secretary of State for the Union. Is this not a pregnant chapter in the history of our downward career? Fellow-citizens! I tell you, it speaks a language not to be mistaken, and we must be prepared to assert our own rights or we are gone beyond redemption.

But, to progress with the history of abolition as connected with the annexation of Texas.—It is well known that a great movement was made in this country and also in Great Britain against that annexation because it might strengthen and perhaps perpetuate slavery in these States. About this period, the "World's Convention" was held in London with representatives from this country as well as every where else, for the abolition of African Slavery throughout the world. The Representatives from the Northern States became fully possessed of the opinions of such men as Mr. Webster and Mr. Adams at that time, and acted strictly in concert with British Philanthropists and British Statesmen in all their moves upon Texas.

There was a communication made by Mr. J. Q. Adams to the British Government through Mr. Lewis Tappan and by him proclaimed in the "World's Convention."

Mr. Tappan said, "in a conversation I had with John Quincy Adams on that subject, (the annexation of Texas) he said, 'I deem

it the duty of Great Britain as a christian nation to tell the Texians that slavery must be abolished; that it shall not be planted there after all the efforts and sacrifices that have been made to abolish it all over the world. The annexation of Texas will," he said, "be a leading topic next Session, but I will oppose it with all the vigor and talent that God has given me. If slavery is abolished in Texas, it must speedily fall throughout America, and when it falls in America it will expire throughout Christendom."

Sir Robert Peel immediately after this, carried the discriminating duty on Sugar which is an annual tax, on the ground that it would enable him to make a treaty with Brazil for the abolition of slavery. His words were, "Make the attempt.—Try to get *concessions from those from whom you get your supplies*. You may depend upon it there is a growing conviction among the people of these countries that slavery is not unaccompanied by great dangers. In Cuba, in the United States, in the Braziles, there is a ferment on the subject of slavery which is spreading *and will spread*. Some from humane and benevolent motives—some on account of interested fears begin to look at the great example we have set, and begin to look at the *consequences which may result from that example NEARER HOME*. It is impossible to look at the discussions in the United States of America, and especially to the *conflicts between the Northern and Southern States*, without seeing that slavery in that nation stands on a precarious footing (Cheers.) The same feeling is growing up in Brazil and Cuba," &c.

Not long after this—*December 26th*, 1843, Lord Aberdeen, at the head of Foreign Affairs in Great Britain, addressed that famous letter to the Secretary of State in the United States, which produced such profound sensation in this country. He justifies the course his government pursued towards Texas in attempting to procure emancipation there. He says—"with regard to the latter point (abolishing slavery in Texas) it must be and is well known both to the United States and to the whole world, that Great Britain desires, and is constantly exerting herself to procure, the *general abolition of slavery throughout*

*the world*." Again he says—"With regard to Texas, we avow that we wish to see slavery abolished there, as elsewhere, and we should rejoice if the recognition of that country by the Mexican Government should be accompanied by an engagement on the part of Texas to abolish slavery eventually, and under proper conditions throughout the Republic."

Fellow Citizens! I am thus minute in tracing the history of this great question to show you that the final result and object of all these movements is the total overthrow of your institutions—that it is a concerted system between Great Britain and Northern men—that they intend to strike the blow when they dare do it. This letter of Lord Aberdeen was formally laid before our Government, and if the present Secretary of State had been at the head of affairs, where would we have been? With his present declarations that he never had and never would add to the slave power, he would then have prostrated us at the feet of Great Britain, and thrown Texas to the Lion as a sweet morsel to be devoured, only to whet his appetite for the victims that were to be prepared for the greater slaughter. But thank God! other men were at the head of affairs, and Mr. Calhoun's great letter as Secretary of State, turned the tide of events. Texas was annexed and our foreign and domestic enemies were foiled.

The Hon. John Reed, a leading man and friend of Mr. Webster, from Massachusetts, used this language in a letter dated 4th August, 1843.—"It must be understood that the Free States will neither consent nor submit to the annexation of Texas to this Union. Such annexation would result in its dissolution.—In fact it would be an absolution from the bonds and obligations of the Constitution."

At meetings in Massachusetts, it was resolved over and over that annexation was dissolution, and that Massachusetts was absolved from all political obligations to the slave States." At the close of the 26th Congress, thirteen influential members, among whom were J. Quincy Adams, N. B. Calhoun, Gov. Slade, Mr. Morgan of New

York, and Mr. Howard of Michigan, all united in a manifesto in opposition to annexation of Texas, in which they used the following language :

"We hesitate not to say that annexation effected by any act or proceedings of the Federal Government or any of its departments would be identical with dissolution. It would be a violation of our national compact—its objects, designs and the great elementary principles which entered into its formation, of a character so deep and fundamental, and would be an attempt to intermix an institution (slavery) and a power, of a nature so unjust in themselves, so injurious to the interests and abhorrent to the feelings of the *people of the free States*, as in our opinion, not only inevitably to result in a dissolution of the Union, but fully to justify it!"

In a studied address delivered by Hon. J. Q. Adams to the young men of Boston, reported in the National Intelligencer of 12th October, 1844. He uses these striking and significant words :

#### YOUNG MEN OF BOSTON!

"The generation of men to whom, now fifty-one years by-gone, I gave this solemn pledge, have passed entirely away. Those in whose name I gave it are, like him who addresses you, dropping into the grave. But they have redeemed their and my pledge. They were your fathers, and they have maintained the freedom transmitted to them by their sires of the war of independence. They have transmitted that freedom to you, and upon you now devolves the duty of transmitting it unimpaired to your posterity.

Your trial is approaching. The spirit of *freedom* and the spirit of *slavery* are drawing together for the *deadly conflict of arms*. The annexation of Texas to this Union is the blast of the trumpet for a foreign, civil, servile, and Indian war, of which the Government of your country, fallen into faithless hands, have already twice given the signal—first by a shameless treaty, rejected by a virtuous Senate; and again by the glove of defiance, hurled by the apostle of nullification, at the avowed policy of the British empire peacefully to promote the extinction of slavery throughout the world. Young men of Boston: burnish your armor, prepare for the conflict, and I say to you in the language of Galgacus to the ancient Britons. Think of your forefathers! think of your posterity!"

This is no common language from a common man. I do not choose to quote from your common fanatics or your ordinary men, but I quote from those who are high in intellect—high in popular favor—high in power.

And I say to you in reply, Young Men of Carolina! The contest may "draw together for the deadly conflict of arms."—Burnish your armor—prepare for the conflict—and if that terrible day does come, do your duty—Strike for your country and her altars—Think of your forefathers! Think of your posterity!

After the British Government and our Northern brethren were defeated in their schemes against us to be effected through Texas, they fell back to circumscribe us by the Wilmot Proviso. After the acquisition of those vast territories from Mexico—it was suddenly laid down that there was no need for the Wilmot Proviso to exclude us, for we were already excluded by the Mexican law. And in addition to this it was gravely laid down as American law, that any band of adventurers that might seize upon those territories, under the natural and unalienable rights of man, could assume to themselves sovereign power, and then erect any government they might think proper, so they called it a State, and extend their jurisdiction to any boundaries they might declare, no matter how extensive or where the lines might run. Until this, we had supposed that the States united through their common agent, the Federal Government, had alone the power to take incipient steps in the organization of territories in the public domain. But, under this new doctrine, together with the assumption as to the force of Mexican law, we were to be excluded from all privileges as citizens of slave-holding States in the rich territories acquired, and that was sufficient to make those, who now assume to be our masters, adopt it. They have asserted the power to circumscribe us—they have enclosed us in a great penitentiary wall, and our doom is inevitable. In the progress of a few years, and, by one quarter of a million of foreign emigrants a year, they will, under their system, have new States sufficient to make any law—or, if the letter of the Constitution should happen to stand in the way, they will have ample power to make a direct amendment. Fifty years is but a very short time in national existence, and fifty years will fix us beyond the hope of a patriotic

and courageous struggle. No! now is the day, and now is the hour—Rise and rush to the "Red Sea," and if the God of Hosts will not save us, we may yet again praise Him who saved us safely out of the power of our enemies. But it is said there is danger and difficulty in going alone. That separate State action will be full of disaster and ruin. Those who say so, admit that it is ruin to stay. We have been denied equality of rights—we have been spurned and contemned. Instead of conciliation and kindness, our labors have been derided and we have been held up for denunciation, in our morals and social intercourse, before the christian and moral world. Our country is one constant scene of bitter agitation and painful anxiety. There is not a mother or a father in our land that does not ask the question every night, what is to become of us? Is this the fostering care of kind protective Government? This itself is odious tyranny and intolerable degradation. What though there be difficulty and danger in the State acting alone! It cannot be worse than to stand and bear it. Better to move like freemen boldly for the independence and rights of the country, for if we should even perish, we will fall with our honor saved and a name unstained, for the admiration of posterity. But if we stand still, we shall perish like mice under an exhausted receiver—with no consideration save the pity of the world.

Mr. Chairman! has any man thought seriously of the terrible effects of abolition when brought to our homes and to our fire-sides? Three millions of black slaves, turned loose upon the community, would present such a scene as the world has never conceived. They would come directly into competition with the white mechanics—artizans and common laborers of the whole country. They would work for little or nothing—a bottle of rum and twist of tobacco; what would become of the free artizans, enterprising mechanics, and industrious laborers of our country? Brought down to a degraded competition with three millions of slaves made free. Now, they are regulated and labor in an entirely different field. Who then could

live here? Now, the white man feels freedom to be his privilege and rank—it separates him from the caste below him. He will then have the black man put up as his equal, and they will sink together into a common but degraded level. The wealthy man, if he is mean enough and base enough to desert the country, may be able to save something and do so, but the poor man whose fate is fixed from necessity in the doom and destiny of the country is here and here forever—there is no escape. Let no man hug to himself the fatal delusion that he is too poor to feel the withering blight of that dreadful curse, if it should ever come. There is none so high and none so low, but he will suffer under the howling of that dreadful blast. There will be no peasant cottage, that hangs upon our hills, however humble, but will fall before that midnight storm. There will be no sign upon the door posts or lintels of any chosen and elect, by which the destroying angel may know to pass by.

Gentlemen! many suppose, because slavery has been extinguished in other countries without a convulsion, that it can be done here. But the circumstances are totally different. In the Roman Republic, the slaves were of the same color and of the same race. Many of them were learned and refined. They were taught those things that were supposed to be effeminate by their warlike masters. They merely changed as the government and laws and society changed, and were gradually and finally lost in amalgamation, the races all being the same. So in England. And although the followers of WILLIAM the conqueror looked for ages in contempt upon the Saxons, yet their color and physical attributes were the same.—True, when one of their Kings, at last, intermarried with a Saxon, it produced a shock to the conquering race, yet it was the beginning of that general amalgamation, which finally intermingled the two races until the distinctions were lost and forgotten, and slavery gradually fell without a convulsion, and without even a general law in relation to it. Not so here. God himself has made such distinctions of color and other physical as well as moral attributes, as forever forbid the same

termination. No! no! go forward in this wild scheme of mad fanaticism and whining philanthropy, and you convert this land of happiness into scenes of universal blood, and then, finally, into a barbarian wilderness. It will dry up all the sources of prosperity and refinement, and we will have nothing but a melancholy and deserted land with, perchance, here and there a solitary inhabitant to point out the graves and the monuments of our once heroic race. And this is done in a far shorter time than many of us imagine.—Look at St. Domingo—the very name enrattles one's veins—look at all the West India Islands of France and England. Less than twenty-five years ago—cultivation, refinement and the arts held their mingled sway over those fairest regions of God's creation, and where now are they? Laid low in ruin and desolation. Vagrant labor, set free, stalks in lean and hungry ferocity throughout a deserted land. And, we too in like manner, will pass into desolation if we submit now to an unscrupulous and an unlimited government. Talk about the commercial ruin to Charleston if we act! why, sir, it is nothing compared with our destiny if we do not act. Besides, when is it that any people ever did tread the path that leads to Independence without difficulty and danger?—Peace, quiet, safety, ease, are the lullabies of Despotism. Go into the interior of Syria—look upon that vast and calm sea “sleeping like an unweaned infant”—visit its coast and you will see one wide spread plain of salt and desolation—and no living creature can breathe in the hot air that rises from its calm, heavy, bituminous surface—that, sir, is the dead sea of despotism and submission.

Turn to another picture, and look at the deep blue waters of these bounding billows—the spray dashing against the very Heavens—look at the coast covered with the richest verdure. All nature leaps and bounds under the plastic hand of a beneficent God—cultivation and refinement rise up to bless and to gladden the heart of man. True the waters rise mountain high and there is peril and danger to all who ride on its stormy surface. That, sir, is the sea of liberty.

He who expects to live a freeman, must

expect to encounter danger and difficulty—without this, liberty itself loses much of its essential worth.

I think the probabilities are that we will have to act alone if we act at all. I hope however we will do nothing rash—we must take proper time and be prepared before we strike. We must do nothing to offend even the pride of our sister Southern States. We must do nothing under an idea of compelling them to act. If we are driven to it, we must make our own issues according to our own interests, independent of them if they will not counsel with us. We must not force an issue for them. After we shall have acted in the most moderate and modest manner, all will readily perceive, should the General Government attempt to usurp the power to decide and tender us force to compel submission or to hinder or annoy us, that then in reality a new issue is made by the Government, and what may be our lot must finally be the lot of every other Southern State.—Like the victims that Polyphemus singled out for each repast, the lot of all will be, to be devoured by the same voracious jaws. We may be the first victim, but there will be no escape for the rest unless they pass *out together with the flock*.

I have hopes in Georgia. And if McDONALD, the noble standard bearer of the cause of justice and right shall succeed this Fall, and a majority to the Legislature is elected with him, I feel that we will have friends there. And any proposition that might be made to us from them, I would respectfully receive and consider it as from our brethren. So of Mississippi. There is QUITMAN, from the storm of battle, as brave as a Knight Templar from the holy land itself, and the gallant DAVIS who waved as bright a sword as ever flashed over the perilous ridge of victory. These are men who are able at the council board as well as mighty captains in the field, and if they carry Mississippi, as I feel assured they will, we will greet whatever propositions they have to make with a cordial and a hearty welcome, because we know they could make none but what were compatible with the vindication of our rights and our honor. I am for co-operation if it can

be obtained in any reasonable time. I will do any thing, but yield principle, to obtain it.

The elections in nearly all the States take place before our Convention can meet. Congress has to meet. Ohio has already elected open abolition Senators,—so has New York, and so has Massachusetts. They are openly for a repeal of the fugitive slave law—and declare there was, in fact, no Compromise. The two parties in Pennsylvania have recently made issue upon precisely the same points. If Gov. Jonnson and his friends carry Pennsylvania, it is upon the ground that there is no Compromise and that the fugitive slave law must be repealed. If they succeed then there will be no alternative, we must strike and strike immediately although the Union should fall—we must strike and strike alone, if none will strike with us, be the consequences what they may.

I was elected a member of the Convention while I was absent from the State without the slightest consultation with me. It was no post to be coveted. And I desire to be entirely free from all party feeling that may spring up—to be perfectly unbiased, so as to be able to do my duty conscientiously

according to circumstances when the Convention meets. The final destiny of the slave-holding race is one of the greatest problems that is to be worked out in modern times. If we are wise, we can save our order of civilization—but it will require great judgement and great boldness. There may be too much caution. A bold move, at the proper time, may be the basis of strength. The internal structure of our society has great strength. Our military organization gives much greater capacity for defence than appears upon the surface. I trust we shall be able to fulfill our destiny as becomes an intelligent and brave people.

I love my own hills and my own vallies, because my friends and my kindred live there—I love my own home and my own country, because it was the home and the country of my forefathers—I love my own State, each and every one of her institutions, because they are the institutions handed down to us by a gallant and heroic ancestry. Whatever I am, and whatever I hope to be on earth, is here and here forever,—I stake it all on the Independence of my country.











